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SUBJECT: LEADING SHIA POLITICIAN SHAYKH HUMAM HAMMOUDI
UPDATES PROGRESS ON HIS STRATEGY FOR NATIONAL COMPACT

REF: BAGHDAD 4341

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (S) SUMMARY. Leading Shia Coalition and SCIRI member Shaykh Humam Hammoudi told the Ambassador November 27 that he had presented his national compact plan (reftel) to President Talabani, who approved of it. Hammoudi will brief PM Maliki and VP Tariq al-Hashimi, and then present his plan to the four main political parties (Shia Coalition, Kurdish Alliance, Tawafuq, and Iraqiyya) and the media. Hammoudi said it would be helpful if a U.S. statement in Amman highlighted (a) commitment to democracy and the unity of Iraq, (b) opposition to military coups, (c) support for the government of national unity, and (d) cooperation to help build the economy. Hammoudi said Iran, Syria, and the Arab countries have all recently increased their involvement in Iraq to gain more leverage with the U.S. on other issues, and stressed the need for a strong Iraqi government. END SUMMARY

National Compact Plan: Ready to Be Briefed to PM

12. (S) Shaykh Humam Hammoudi told the Ambassador November 27 that he had presented his national compact plan (reftel and see para 10 for complete text) to President Jalal Talabani in detail and to VP al-Hashimi in preliminary terms. Talabani approved of the plan. Hammoudi will brief al-Hashimi and PM Maliki in detail on November 28. Afterwards, he will present the plan to the four main political parties (Shia Coalition, Kurdish Alliance, Tawafuq, and Iraqiyya) and the media.

13. (S) COMMENT: The plan (see para 10 for complete text) reflects the main points from Hammoudi's previous conversation with the Ambassador (reftel). It acknowledges that Iraq's problems require national, regional, and international solutions that "answer the fears, interests, and aspirations of all parties." It makes the case for the establishment of strong constitutional state as "the basis for a pressing national consensus" and "a basic, common, and unifying goal." The plan states that the common denominator among all of the internal and external parties is a "democratic and united Iraq that has positive relations." It calls for issuing a pledge or guarantee by all of the countries to assure everyone of this. END COMMENT.

14. (S) Hammoudi said a strong Iraqi government requires agreement among the political parties on a program to build such a government with capable institutions. Then, the program needs the blessing of the marja'ia. The goal is a strong, professional government with marja'ia support. He expressed optimism that the political parties just need to sit together and reach an agreement. Hammoudi explained that the compact would be added to the Constitution - perhaps as an annex.

Goals for Upcoming Amman Meeting and Abdulaziz al-Hakim
Travel to U.S.

¶5. (S) Hammoudi said it would be helpful if a U.S. statement in Amman highlights (a) commitment to democracy and the unity of Iraq, (b) opposition to military coups, (c) support for the government of national unity, and (d) cooperation to help build the economy. Hammoudi added that if MNF-I is serious about transferring security to the GOI, it will change the whole dynamic and strengthen the GOI, with the U.S. supportive from behind the scenes.

¶6. (S) Hammoudi expressed concern that reports emanating from media reviews of American strategy in Iraq all point to withdrawal. According to Hammoudi, it is no longer that the U.S. will stay until victorious, but that the U.S. will leave in the best possible situation. The Ambassador reiterated the President's strong commitment to Iraq, but stressed the importance of Iraq taking the right decisions.

¶7. (S) The Ambassador told Hammoudi that there needs to be a close understanding between SCIRI and the USG as a result of the upcoming trip to the U.S. of SCIRI and Shia Coalition leader Abdulaziz al-Hakim. Particularly as the security relationship evolves, the political, economic, cultural, and educational relationships will assume an even greater importance and need to be strengthened.

Regional Dynamics: Syria, Iran, and the Arab Countries

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¶8. (S) Hammoudi told the Ambassador that prior to the November U.S. mid-term elections, Iran and Syria were ready to make Iraq a point of dialogue. Now the stakes are higher.

Syria sees better opportunities to cause headaches for the U.S. and Iraq. As Iraqi partners, Hammoudi said, we do not look positively on this. It is complicating matters, lengthening the transition period, and making the security situation unstable. Hammoudi stressed the importance of a dialogue on the basis of principles of achieving prosperity, stability, and benefit to the Iraqi people. He reiterated that the Iraqi government is not a regional threat. Iran is mainly interested in the nuclear issue and Syria in ending its isolation. He said the best solution is to have a strong Iraqi government (NOTE: This was a consistent theme in the November 23 meeting. END NOTE).

¶9. (S) Hammoudi stated that Arab governments are working on weakening the GOI. He added that "the weaker we are, the more they are getting involved." They want (a) an Iraqi government headed by a Shia non-Islamist (like Ayad Allawi); (b) a central government similar to previous regime, but non-Baathist; (c) and a united, central, independent government balanced between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Hammoudi added that there can no longer be a central government that does not consult with ministers and an assembly.

NATIONAL COMPACT DRAFT TEXT

¶10. (SBU) "The Iraqi crisis: The prospects for a solution"

Preamble

A number of observations form the general framework of thinking in order to open prospects for analyzing and finding solutions or useful ways to deal with the complex Iraqi situation. Before going into the details, we put forth these indisputable points for the sake of reaching a common

understanding and logical and acceptable starting points. After recognizing that the Iraqi situation, in its current status, constitutes a major internal, regional and international challenge, its deterioration, as expected, will lead to civil war, partition, or an escalation in violence which will translate into to a catastrophe for all (Iraq, the region, and the world) and may lead to dangerous crises, wars and unmanageable violence. Thus, the Iraqi situation can be the gate to hell if left on its current course, or it can be a gate of good and stability for all if there are ways to find an acceptable solution to all.

First: The Iraqi situation now ... and for a variety of reasons, we can say that the (fears, interests and aspirations) of the Iraqi groups and the various components of the Iraqi society had overlapped or crossed path with the fears, interests and aspirations of the regional and international situations in all their equations and different directions.

The consequences of this outcome and its entitlements are as follows:

(1) There is absolutely no internal solution. There is absolutely no solution presented by the neighboring countries or the region. The international party with all its might (America and Britain) is unable to find a solution without the participation or contribution of a regional or national party

(2) For any solution to be reasonable, enforceable and successful, it must deal with the fears, aspirations, and interests of all parties, in particular the main and influential parties in the Iraqi crisis.

- a. Internal components
- b. Influential regional parties
- c. International party

Is it possible to find a satisfactory and acceptable solution to all the parties?

(3) Any solution must turn into an international, regional or bilateral covenant and contract in order to become a regional solution so it may be a guarantee and an acceptable framework in which all the parties to the crisis can find that their fears, interests and aspirations were recognized and answered in this covenant and contract.

(4) It is the norm in such a complex crisis that includes

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more than one party, to reach a framework for its resolution (in an agreement, convention, or covenant) or by a party that has substantial relations with all the parties and is able to uncover compromises that satisfy all the parties. In the Iraqi situation, we need to search for such an influential and acceptable mediator.

Second: The axis of the crisis is Iraq; therefore the Iraqi will represented by the State and its constitutional and legal institutions (the government) and the unity of its supporting forces will be the most effective and influential factor in solving the crisis. With this, the stronger, more unified and clear in its course and will, the Iraqi government and its political forces will be the key to solving the crisis.

The strength of each party shall be measured by its influence over the course of the crisis or in its ability to realize the subject of its agenda. What is also true is that the field of the crisis, its geographical, constructional, and procedural scope in practice is doubled in calculating the strength of the party. This vision, if it came true, shall impose many entitlements therein:

(1) A big part of the solution lies in the hands of the influential Iraqi forces if they are able to find a cohesive and effective government that has an agreed upon direction. The weaker the Iraqi government's performance and the more its will is scattered, the weaker is its role in solving the crisis.

(2) The weakness of the Iraqi government's performance and the absence of the national consensus will lay the ground for increased interferences by other parties (regional or international). With this, the crisis shall become more complicated if there were no compromises between all these parties.

(3) Establishing a strong government and a supporting national consensus may be a demand by all (local, regional and international) at the time when this government is a point of compromise or the acceptable threshold that represents (the fears, interests and aspirations) of all parties (national, regional and international).

Or if the achievement of this goal (a government with strong performance supported by national consensus) is a rejected demand and challenge that must be overcome and stopped when this government is a challenge that agitates the fears of some parties and threatens their interests or security.

(4) The establishment of a Constitutional state and securing (the professional) and effective government that is capable of performing its security and services tasks, providing the needs of its citizens and enforcing the law on all Iraqis irrespective of their affiliations or their political identity. This is considered (after the escalation of the crises and sacrifices) a public national demand which Iraqis are calling for. It represents a basic, common and unifying goal.

The submission to this goal (establishing the strong constitutional state) can be the basis for a pressing national consensus. It constitutes an essential and important step towards the solution.

Third: Who are the influential forces in the Iraqi file and crisis? What are their fears, their interests and their aspirations?

Is it possible to find a settlement that answers the fears, interests and aspirations of all national, regional and international parties?

In order to answer this question one must assume that all the parties are keen to preserve Iraq in a manner that does not threaten the security of any one, as a minimum, in order for Iraq to be accepted. Is this achievable?

The following are the influential national forces that form the key for solving the crisis by way of finding the common denominator between them.

UIA: or in a more accurate expression, SCIRI and the independent forces and Dawa who support SCIRI and are allied with it, and the general direction of the marja'ia.

KA: The two Kurdish parties and the general direction of the Kurds.

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The Sunnis: Perhaps the IIP or some of its forces, some tribal leaders, secular and social leaders in Sunni areas(

And here, it is important to identify the fears, interests, and aspirations of all parties in order to reach a common denominator among them.

The Shiites and their political forces:

Their Fears: The return of the previous equation (Rule of the minority) and the accompanying dictatorship, oppression, tyranny, and the deprivation of rights.
Their Interests: Democracy: One vote for one person.
Commitment and their electoral entitlement.
Their Aspirations: Implementation of the Constitution, in particular the stipulations concerning Federalism.

The Kurds:

Their Fears: The failure of the democratic process in a way that would threaten the existence of the region of Kurdistan.
Their Interests: Democracy and Federalism and their rights in the central government.
Their Aspirations: Implementation of the Constitution; weakness of the central government; strength of the Region (Secession)

The Sunnis:

Their Fears: Their existence and their interests; Becoming second class citizens.
Their Interests: To effectively participate and contribute in the decision-making process in a way that concurs with their size (Maintain the unity of Iraq).
Their Aspirations: To have a "Veto" right and the right to "Revoke any decision". To regain the status they had during Saddam's reign.

Common:

Fears of the Kurds and Shiites: Return of the previous form of governance. The fears of the Sunnis are: Partition and monopolization of power.
Interests of the Kurds and Shiites: Democracy and Federalism.
Aspirations of the Sunnis and Kurds: Participation in the political decision and in running the country and not to be overlooked.

On the Regional Level:

Syria:

Their Fears: Overthrowing their regime. Dividing Iraq.
Their Interests: Positive and effective relations with Iraq; Economic participation; Political understanding.
Their Aspirations: Participation of their political groups in power. Political alliance.

Iran:

Their Fears: Overthrowing their regime. Building a regime that is hostile to them and threatens their internal security.
Their Interests: Positive economic and political relations
Their Aspirations: Special relations with them, different from the American role.

Saudi Arabia:

Their Fears: Dividing Iraq. An Iraq submissive to Iran or hostile to them.
Their Interests: Arabism. Good relations.
Their Aspirations: The ruler must be Sunni and the government must be central and hostile to Iran.

Turkey:

Their Fears: Dividing Iraq (the rise of a Kurdistan State) is a threat to them. Kirkuk becoming part of Kurdistan.
Their Interests: Good and economic relations. To ensure that the Turkmen have a good status.
Their Aspirations: Kirkuk becoming a special Federal State. They want to represent the Turkmen.

On the International Level:

United States and Britain:

Their Fears: Iraq becoming a country hostile to America's interests (terrorist region).
Their Interests: Positive "economic and political" relations. Positive cooperation on all levels.
Their Aspirations: Strategic alliance. For Iraq to be in the American circle.

Common Denominator:

Democratic and united Iraq that has positive relations; cooperative with his regional and international surrounding (Arabic and Islamic); opened in his economy and politics to

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the world.

National, Regional and International Compact:

Perhaps by issuing a pledge or a guarantee by all the countries of the region and the world in order to assure everyone inside Iraq in that regard.

Democracy is the Guarantee (Stability, Openness, and Security):

Determining Iraq's future courses, on the premise that Iraq is democratic and federal, will be subject to political maneuvering and the law of upward and downward movement in the political courses and their influence in the Parliament. Today, an alliance or coalition can be formed on sectarian basis. Tomorrow and after the absence of tension and political tugging, it shall divide and transform into a gathering of interests, political directions and other coalitions. With this, the political map can be formed and the government as well in a different form such as the case in all the countries that emerged from political crises and ethnic and religious fanaticism.

Or if a certain party or alliance, due to its bad performance and its inability to provide an acceptable accomplishment or a reasonable behavior, loses its popular stock and become a second or third class party. Hence, we find that the spiral cycle in the democratic process not to be straight but rather a spiral circle which means that those outside the government shall return to power due to the accumulation of mistakes by choosing the multitudes in a reasonable election and so on.

Democracy is the guarantee that the authority will definitely not be in the hand of one group because that will lead to chaos. The democratic system and the application of Federalism are the guarantees for the people of Iraq by way of interacting with his regional and international surrounding. This shall form a guarantee for the stability and prosperity in Iraq and competition on its street by way of offering services here or there.

Democracy and its regulations, such as transparency and the peaceful transfer of power, shall stimulate everyone's appetite to hope and expect the best. The issue requires patience, if Iraq was presumed to be democratic. Openness is better than isolation and knowing the truth is better than ignoring it.

First: The "international" party can be a polarizing, subscribing and influencing axis for many reasons related to its "neutrality, ability, and knowledge", and due to the absence of its own national interests which removes it from the circle of internal polarization and deals and due to its influence on more than one level. Hence, all these matters constitute justifications because it is a strong party in politics and shall remain influential on the Iraqi scene for a generation at the least (20 years).

Second: The containment of Iraq by any regional party is not possible because the interests of each regional party constitute a threat to the regional interests of the other party. This would cause an imbalance in the internal equation and might possibly affect a specific decision or direction. To turn Iraq into a regional party translates into an imbalance in the national equation we referred to because the national and sectarian balance in Iraq and its characteristics make it difficult for Iraq to become a regional party or a party hostile to any party. This might not be positive.

A Candid Question:

Can Iran transform Iraq into an area of influence hostile to others?

The democratic reality that can be counted in favor of Iran is, at the highest estimates and in our best assessment, much less than 35 percent. This can't make Iraq (a hostile influence) or just an influence. This is possible but what really exists, within the circle, may be supportive to Iran on sectarian issues only. As for the interests, their influence is not clear. The competition over the interests may open the door to problems between the Iraqis and Iran causing both sides to fortify oneself within the national circle.

-- The transparent democratic system can answer all the regional and international fears and can fulfill their interests and their aspirations, such as Federalism can fulfill the interests and fears of the internal situation.

-- The democratic system prevents partition, sectarian war or internal fighting.

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-- The representative system is an Arab lie that will only lead to a civil war and partition.

KHALILZAD